7/5/81 C2700-1

Automotive News

Detroit, June 29, 1981

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56th year—$35 per year, $1.00 per copy

Delay in Clean Air action poses a threat to makers

By Helen Kahn
Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON. — Substantive talk of what to do about future auto emission standards has started in the Senate Environment Committee, although the Reagan Administration has yet to make known its position.

The first two days of hearings clearly indicated wide disagreement between the auto makers and their suppliers of control equipment; between some Senators (including the Republican Chairman Robert Stafford of Vermont) and what is believed to be the position of the Administration, and between environmentalists and the auto makers over the concept of averaging.

The failure of the Administration to consult with key Congressmen, the delay in its proposals—which will probably not come until after the July 4 recess — and the speculation of "gutting" the law have combined to make it almost certain that the Clean Air Act will not be changed by the end of September. (Last time around, it took almost three years to deal with this enormously long and complex law.)

Any delay beyond September or October becomes crucial for the auto companies, for they would normally be making hardware and emission-control decisions for '83 models by that time.

They all want the CO standard to be changed to 7.0 gpm and the NOx standard changed to 2.0 gpm. The fight will be over both, but primarily the NOx level and whether or not three-way catalysts will be used.

Other fights will occur over diesel particulates and the adequacy of trap oxidizers, the level of control for heavy-duty trucks, high-altitude vehicles and, above all, over the "mobile bubble" concept of averaging fleet emissions in much the same way as CAFE is used for fuel-economy standards.

• On the first day, the committee gave the star role to Tom Austin, head of the California Air Resources Board and a former EPA employe. Austin said flat out that two proposals of the auto makers and some EPA staffers — relaxing NOx and averaging — would double auto pollution and contribute to acid rain as well.

He cited data gathered by California to show that fuel economy can be improved and more diesels used without relaxing standards.

Countering auto makers' arguments that relaxing NOx control is acceptable because few violations of the ambient air nitrogen dioxide standards occurs outside California, Austin said such a relaxation would mean more "junk" in the air, such as nitrate particles. It also raises the possibility of nitric acid rain to damage lakes, streams and forests, he said.

Other arguments for relaxing NOx emissions — fuel-economy improvement and more diesels —were questioned by Austin. Citing California experience (where manufacturers can certify at 1.5 gpm NOx with a 100,000 mile warranty or at 0.7 gpm for the normal 50,000-mile life —Austin noted that Checker, using the General Motors diesel engine, had slightly increased the exhaust-gas recirculation (EGR) rate, certified at 0.7 gpm NOx and found city fuel economy was 20-MPG — the same as for the GM diesel at 1.5 gpm NOx.

Moreover, said Austin, Mercedes-Benz has told CARB it is

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AMC Targa

Open-air four-wheelin'

One of the newest conversions on the market is the targa-top treatment for American Motors four-wheel-drive Eagle models by Griffith Co., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Griffith plans 1,200 such conversions in the '82 model year, each retailing for $3,795. It says it has an interrupt-ship arrangement with AMC whereby converted targa-top cars are shipped to dealers through regular factory channels.

3-cylinder turbo diesel and CV transmission

75-MPG Volkswagen in the wings

By Paul Lienert
and Jake Kelderman

"There's a good chance we'll be building a 75-MPG car in the next five years."

Those words from Volkswagen of America's top engineer, Duane Miller, signal the small-car/fuel-economy wars have just begun in this country.

"We're already over 40 MPG (Rabbit diesel) with pretty decent performance, using relatively straightforward powertrains," said Miller, engineering vice president of VWoA. "With more-advanced designs, like our supercharged three-cylinder diesel engine and possibly a continuously variable transmission, we should be able to get into the 70s with just a small sacrifice in performance."

To date, the only major auto company to even talk about that kind of fuel economy has been General Motors, where design boss Irv Rybicki has said his staff is developing a small four-passenger car that could be capable of delivering 75 MPG with a two-cylinder, motorcycle-type engine.

But Miller's comments indicate VW is moving ahead with a full-scale production program designed to put the first true 75-MPG car on the road by 1986.

Like GM, VW feels it can squeeze that kind of mileage from a four-passenger car.

"I don't think we need to build any tiny two-passenger models," said Miller. "Maybe we'll need something smaller than the Rabbit. I'd like to see us bring the Polo (the smaller sister to the Rabbit, sold only in Europe) to this country in a few years. We see a market for it here."

Several auto firms are planning to build two-passenger models by 1985-86, capable of delivering up to 60 MPG, according to industry insiders. But the new four-passenger minicars planned by GM, Ford Motor Co. and others during the same period are likely to get only 40 to 50 MPG, using current powertrain technology.

It is clear VWoA intends to maintain its lead in the fuel-economy derby in the U. S., where the Rabbit diesel has been the top-rated car for the last four years.

Miller did not specify which vehicle may receive the production version of the supercharged three-cylinder diesel, basically a development of the current four-cylinder block.

It is believed the company will introduce a redesigned Rabbit here in late '84, but it will use existing gas and diesel powertrains. The three-cylinder apparently won't be ready for production before '85, according to sources at VWoA. By then, it may be installed in the next-generation Rabbit or in an updated version of the Polo. There is even talk of designing a new four-passenger, front-drive model to accommodate the engine.

The engine is already being tested in running prototypes, according to Miller. With a supercharger, the diesel three is said to have the same power characteristics as a larger four-cylinder gas engine.

Fuel economy in preliminary testing by VW is in excess of 90 MPG, according to sources who say VW has conducted the tests using a duplicate of the EPA fuel-economy test cycle. Most of the tremendous gains in mileage come from shutting off the engine at stops—the EPA city cycle has 26 stops and the highway cycle has 10—then restarting it, and boosting it to maximum efficiency via the supercharger, which does not exhibit the low-speed lag normally associated with turbochargers.

Advanced engine electronics also may be used to meter fuel more precisely and govern engine operation, based on electronic sensing of engine tem-

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Japan sets up quotas for shipments to U.S.

TOKYO.—Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry has given that nation's auto makers quotas on car shipments to the U. S. for the first year of the three-year voluntary limitation of such shipments.

Under the agreement reached by the two nations, Japanese car shipments to the U. S. will be limited to 1,680,000 for the period from April 1, 1981, to March 31, 1980.

The estimated quotas are as follows: Toyota, 518,000; Nissan (Datsun), 453,000; Honda, 350,000; Mazda, 159,000; Mitsubishi, 114,000; Subaru, 66,000, and Isuzu, 17,000.

Those figures add up to 1,677,000, close to the voluntarily established limit of 1,680,000.

Japanese makers shipped about 1,820,000 cars to the U. S. during the 1980 calendar year.

The April 1-March 31 time period in the quotas is based on the Japanese fiscal year.

Japanese car sales in the U. S. during that period will undoubtedly be higher than the 1,680,000 quota because the makers had good inventories of cars in the U. S.

The year-to-year changes listed by sources here for the various makers actually show a bit of an increase over year-earlier totals. This is because they are changes in the number of cars actually shipped from Japan to the U. S. from April of last year to March of this year. Shipments had begun to taper off by the beginning of that fiscal period.

Changes listed by sources show declines of 7,000 for Toyota and 6,000 each for Nissan and Honda. There are increases of 4,000 each for Mazda and Mitsubishi and 2,000 for Subaru.

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breaking news

McNealy joins Kenyon & Eckhardt

DETROIT.—William McNealy Jr. has joined Kenyon & Eckhardt Advertising as executive vice president, a new position, on the Chrysler Corp. account. Most recently a management consultant and earlier a senior executive at companies such as AMF, Inc., and American Motors, McNealy will be responsible for K&E's Chrysler account management group, as well as for the agency's 10 U. S. field offices that service Chrysler dealer associations. He will headquarter in Detroit.

Recchia to head Mitsubishi in U. S.

LOS ANGELES.—Richard Recchia has been named general manager of Mitsubishi's U. S.-based operations. The firm will start importing cars in the 1983 model year. Recchia resigned last March as president of Fiat Motors of North America.

Nissan to drop Datsun name in U. S.

TOKYO. — Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. plans to drop the Datsun nameplate in the U. S. in favor of a Nissan nameplate beginning with 1982 models. A Nissan source said the change will be made despite protests from export officials.

Diesel auto market bucks trend, tops last year by 31 pct.

By Jim Plegue
Staff Writer

Sales of diesel-powered automobiles in the U. S. continue to buck the nation's overall car sales trend, posting a healthy 31.45-percent increase during the first five months of calendar 1981.

Manufacturers sold 220,204 diesel-powered cars in the U. S. from Jan. 1 to May 31, up from 167,513 sold during the equivalent period in 1980. Total domestic new-car sales during the period were down 3.38 percent.

General Motors continues to lead the pack, with sales of 138,893 diesel models, up a whopping 59.16 percent from the 93,116 diesel cars sold during the first five months of 1980. Likewise, GM's share of the diesel market increased — from 55.58 percent to 63.07 percent of the market this year.

Oldsmobile — GM's divisional diesel sales leader — increased its production for the period but actually lost slightly over one percentage point of its market penetration because Buick, Pontiac and Chevrolet substantially increased their diesel output.

• Oldsmobile built 69,389 diesel-powered vehicles during the period, followed by Pontiac, 20,025; Buick, 18,744; Chevrolet, 15,422, and Cadillac, 15,313. Pontiac, Buick, Oldsmobile and Cadillac offer the Oldsmobile-built 350-CID (5.7-liter) diesel V-8 engine in full-size and intermediate models.

Chevrolet offers the 350-CID diesel in its full-size models, and in March added the Isuzu-built 1.8-liter four-cylinder diesel to the Chevette's option list.

Sales of diesel-powered Volkswagen Rabbit and Dasher, and Audi 5000 models dropped slightly for the period. The VW-Audi total of 51,655 diesel sales was down 4.42 percent from 54,045 diesels sold last year.

The VW-Audi reduction, combined with GM's increase, helped knock nearly nine percentage points off VW-Audi market penetration. VW-Audi's market share for the first five months of this year was 23.45 percent, down from 32.26 percent for the comparable '80 period.

Volkswagen noted, however, that much of its diesel capacity is being funneled into its VW Pickup model, which has a diesel installation rate of 75 percent, compared with the Rabbit's installation rate of 55 percent. Production of diesel trucks has more than doubled since last year, the company said.

VW-Audi has forecast sales of 124,000 diesel models through calendar '81.

• Mercedes-Benz sold 21,280 diesel models in the U. S. during the first five months of calendar '81, up 37.65 percent from the 15,459 sold during the equivalent period last year. Currently, diesels account for 79.5 percent of total Mercedes sales in the U. S. The company has originally expected that figure to be 76 percent.

Mercedes expects to sell more than 43,000 diesel models in the U. S. through the '81 calendar year. The German maker's top-seller for the last two years has been the 300-SD turbodiesel model, which accounted for 26.6 percent of total sales during the January-May period. That model lists for $34,185.

Peugeot, which sold 5,697 of its 505 diesel and 505 turbodiesel models during the period, posted an increase of 22.09 percent over the 4,666 diesels sold during the equivalent '80 period. The company's diesel target for calendar '81 is 16,000 sales.

Newcomer Isuzu, which started selling to the U. S. market April 1, had retailed 1,390 of its diesel-powered I-Mark models through the end of May. Isuzu's sales target for calendar '81 is 16,000 diesel I-Marks.

• Volvo numbers do not accurately reflect its diesel sales potential. The company was unable to certify its '81 diesel because, according to the maker, there were problems with EPA's diesel fuel supply. All Volvo figures are for 1980-model diesels. Volvo had planned to sell 7,000 of the 1981-model diesels.

Latest diesel car models to debut in the U. S. are the Volkswagen Jetta and Datsun Maxima diesels, both which bowed this month. Datsun expects first-year sales of 6,000 diesel Maxima models, while VW's Jetta target is 9,800 units through calendar '81.

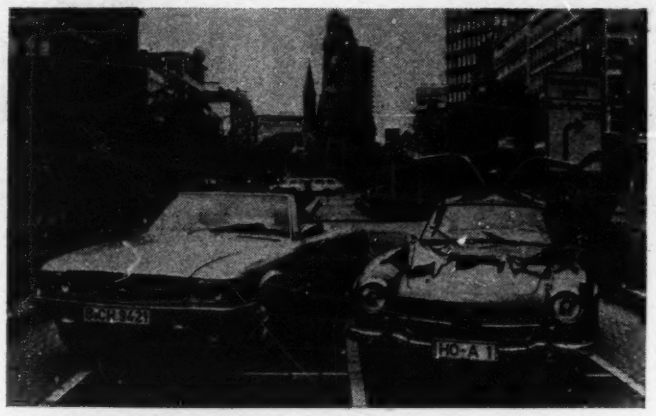
Continuing demand for fuel-stingy diesel cars is prompting other companies to prepare diesels for the U. S. and convincing others to expand their current offerings.

General Motors, for example, is readying a new V-6 diesel engine for the '83 model year, while Ford Motor Co. plans to purchase six-cylinder diesel engines from BMW-Steyr for its future fullsize models. Chrysler is planning to buy diesels from Peugeot for cars in the mid-1980s.

Sales of diesel-powered new cars in the U. S.

	Jan.-May 31, 1981	Percentage Share of Market	Jan.-May 31, 1980	Percentage Share of Market
Oldsmobile	69,389	31.51	54,958	32.81
Cadillac	15,313	6.96	17,400*	10.39*
Buick	18,744	8.51	6,892	4.11
Pontiac	20,025	9.09	10,473	6.25
Chevrolet	15,422	7.00	3,393	2.02
GM Total	138,893	63.07	93,116	55.58
VW Rabbit	41,912	19.03	42,051	25.10
VW Dasher	7,044	3.20	8,521	5.09
Audi 5000	2,699	1.22	3,473	2.07
VW-Audi Total	51,655	23.45	54,045	32.26
Mercedes-Benz	21,280	9.66	15,459	9.23
Peugeot	5,697	2.59	4,666	2.79
Volvo	1,289#	0.58	227	0.14
Isuzu	1,390	0.63	.....	.....
TOTAL	220,204	.....	167,513	.....

*Estimated #1980 models



Two favorites

Side by side, in West Berlin, are the most popular Mercedes-Benz sports car and probably the most famous. Left, a 1981 380-SL, the 100,000th of the two-seat coupe/roadsters that found their warmest welcome in the U. S. market and have been offered with engines ranging from 2.8-liters to 5.0-liters, snuggles up to 300-SL gull-wing, of which only 1,400 were built during the 1954-57 production run.

Toyota expands body operations in Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia—The Toyota Motors Group here has approved the start of the second phase of a major expansion of its factory on the outskirts of Melbourne, where a new $46 million (Australian dollars) body press addition is scheduled to go into production early in 1983.

Toyota already is undertaking a $146 million (Australian) expansion of its plant facilities at Altona and Port Melbourne to produce cylinder blocks and parts for the General Motors-Holden's world car.

The new body press plant will produce 3,000 units a month, increasing the total capacity and output to 5,500 units a month. The Melbourne plants will represent Toyota's largest overseas investment and will amount to $1 billion (Australian).

Grass-roots meetings are part of program to restore confidence

Ford dealers get voice in planning

By Marjorie Sorge

Ford Motor Co. has cleaned out the pipeline between the dealers and factory and is giving the dealers a grass-roots voice in company planning.

With the new program, factory and dealers have held grass-roots meetings with no-holds-barred sessions discussing problems, products, selling techniques, advertising and future outlooks among others.

"We are not going to play 52 pickup any more," said Gordon B. MacKenzie, general manager of Lincoln-Mercury Division. "We want the entire selling organization to be fully aware of how we intend to market every product and we want dealer input at the early stages. We're putting our best brains together."

Dealers, too, are responding favorably to the widened communications line. Edward Soukup, Hempstead Lincoln-Mercury Motors Corp., Hempstead, N. Y., said there is now a restored confidence in Ford Motor Co. management among the dealers.

"It's more than just lip service," he said. "There is more promise for the future and an upbeat feeling about the company. We are over the hesitancy about the future."

Ford has opened the doors to future products to its dealers, showing members of the Marketing Committee of the L-M National Dealer Council the new 1982 and some 1983 models earlier this month.

Each of the nine members showed enthusiasm and optimism about the L-M products in the next two years and were also pleased that some of their marketing and styling suggestions were included.

They predicted a strong sales market in 1983 and said L-M has turned the corner to a new luxury car lineup and a more complete full-product line. According to the dealers the new luxury car lineup will be complete when the Lincoln line is revamped in 1984.

New lines for 1982 include the Continental and five-door Lynx while in 1983 the Topaz and a new XR-7 will be introduced.

"Ford looks like they have some style again," Soukup said. "They did well with the original Mark III and Cougar but then seemed to lose it. Now they are back into the market."

One thing the L-M dealers have fought the factory for in the past 12 to 15 years has been a greater differentiation in styling between Ford and L-M.

According to the dealers, the L-M products will now have a higher level of luxury than the Ford sister products and will also have some different styling. For example, the XR-7 will have an entirely different roofline than the Ford Thunderbird, sources said.

The change in styling will make it easier to sell the cars, the dealers said, because in the past it has been difficult to justify the higher L-M price when the cars look the same as the lower-priced Ford models.

Dealers are also getting more input into the corporate advertising program and hope to have the same theme line used by all districts across the country.

Currently it is planned with Moody Blues and Wings background and music, sources said.

Other ideas evolving from the dealer/factory communications include a pre-order program which MacKenzie characterized as "a plan of some magnitude" and discussions on the best method of selling. That could include rebates, dealer incentives or special packaging techniques, among others, he said.

"It's gratifying to talk openly with them (dealers)," he said. "And if we can't do something, they understand. We've always had a good relationship with the dealers but this is a step further."

The dealers characterized the new program as a "feed and fuel" method and said the factory is really listening to their suggestions. They said the new communications lines help their long-term relationship with the factory.

The expanded communi-

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Saudi Arabia threatens Toyota with blacklist

By Edward Lapham
Financial Editor

The Saudi Arabia threat to Toyota that a joint venture with Ford Motor Co. could mean economic reprisals is likely to affect talks between the two companies, auto analysts said.

Saudi Arabia last week "warned" Toyota that it should not enter into any arrangements with Ford, which is blacklisted by the Arab League nations because it maintains a CKD operation in Israel.

A Saudi Arabia official told a Japanese official, "This is the formal view of the Saudi Arabian government. Please convey this view to Toyota and the United States."

Later in the week the government of Kuwait joined the controversy by issuing its own caveat to Toyota.

Toyota has been a successful exporter to the Arab world. Last year, the Japanese auto maker exported about 200,000 units there, with more than 60 percent going directly to Saudi Arabia and about 15,000 to Kuwait.

"There is no doubt this is going to be a factor in the talks," said Prescott, Ball & Turben analyst Arthur Davis. "This puts Ford at a severe disadvantage in the talks."

Davis said Toyota is one of the few auto makers which has learned how to effectively serve the Arab world by exporting "batches" of cars which meet the individual market needs.

"Toyota is the best managed automotive company in the world," Davis said. "Toyota's management knows its Arab World exports could easily go to 400,000 a year and they don't want to endanger that."

He said several factors, including the Saudi threat, are affecting Toyota-Ford talks, not the least of which is Toyota's new strengthened position.

"Toyota is stalling," he said. "They want to do as harmless an arrangement as possible just to keep a foot in the door in case the shootout in the '83 (U. S.) market gets too bloody."

Arvid Jouppi, John Muir & Co. vice president and auto analyst, agreed that the threat is a factor but said it is nothing new.

"It is a factor, but there is no

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Sneak preview is a pleasant surprise

'82s and '83s impress L-M dealers

By Marjorie Sorge

Ford Motor Co. has made dramatic improvements in its '82 and '83 product lineup in the past 18 months, its dealers say, much to their surprise.

In early June, members of the Lincoln-Mercury National Dealer Council Marketing Committee were in Detroit to view the new offerings for 1982 and 1983. All were very impressed with the models and said the quality in both design and manufacturing is much improved.

"The quality and the Ford dealer system is 100 percent better than in the last two or three years," said Peter Assimon, Express Sales, Inc., Manlius, N. Y. "We had some nit-picky stuff before, in the last year or two, but that's improving."

The improvement in quality can be measured only by the number of complaints from the customers, said Fred C. Smith, council chairman and owner of Fred Smith Lincoln-Mercury, Independence, Mo. He said five years ago, buyers would bring their vehicles back often for little repairs, but the number of returns has dropped, indicating an improvement in quality.

The same group of council members checked out Ford's future plans 18 months ago and left that meeting thinking the company was a long way behind the other makers, the dealers said.

"There is now a vast improvement over the last 18 months," said Richard J. Clements, Clements Lincoln-Mercury, Inc., Shreveport, La. "It looks like they pulled out all the stops and began making the cars we needed. In 1982 we will almost be on par with the other makers and by 1983 we will be there."

• Ed Jussen Jr., council vice chairman and owner of Star Lincoln-Mercury Sales, Inc., Glendale, Calif., said Ford's new product mix will provide well-rounded competition for General Motors as well as the other makers. But the current gas glut may help give L-M an even stronger position.

That division has long been known for its big cars and dealers are hoping a heavy gas supply will bring prospective buyers into their showrooms.

Jussen, a dealer since 1963, said he feels Ford has been a year or two late on some products and "a year ago I would have said we were out of the fight on front-wheel-drive." Now, he said, the new products represent the best down-the-line mix the company has had in his experience.

Most committee members agreed that Lincoln-Mercury is behind the other makers now in the intermediate line but can hold its own in the luxury and small-car markets.

In the 1983 model year, that disparity will disappear, they said, when the new XR-7 is introduced. That car gets away from the boxy look, dealers said, and has flowing, rounded curves giving it a streamlined look. The car will compete not only with the domestics, but with higher-priced Japanese and European imports, they said.

Smith said Ford dealers really need the new intermediate now and its introduction date "may be too late for some dealers who aren't going to make it."

"As pretty as that car is it will sell anytime," he said. "People will be standing in line for it, but we need it this year for survival."

According to Jussen, dealers who will survive are those who are managing their dealerships correctly. He said the current sales slump leaves no room for any mismanagement and the surviving dealers are like the diamonds appearing after coal has been under pressure.

Ronald C. Dale, Rule-Dale Lincoln-Mercury, Modesto, Calif., said the new XR-7 "is the prettiest any manufacturer has produced in the last 15 years. If we had them today I'd take a hundred of them."

Also new for 1983 will be the Topaz, a front-wheel-drive replacement for the Fairmont and Zephyr, but it will not be introduced until '83½, sources said.

"When that car comes in, we are going to be the cat in the bird's nest," Jussen said.

• The members of the marketing committee agreed the Topaz will be a stiff competitor for the General Motors J-car, although the J will have a year's jump on the market, but they are worried about the pricing of the new car.

Smith said the J is priced too high for the market which, if Ford prices the car correctly, may help Topaz sales a year from now.

The Topaz has European styling, flush glass and limo doors, which open into the roof of the car. It will be available as two- or four-door models. And, like the new XR-7, dealers wish they had the car a year earlier.

"The 1983 lineup has the most dynamite models since I've been a dealer," said H. Herald Friedley, Friedley Lincoln-Mercury, Cedar Falls, Ia. He became a dealer in 1958 and opened a Lincoln-Mercury store in 1972.

For 1982, Lincoln-Mercury is also bringing out some new models but the one receiving the most attention from the marketing committee is the Continental, a newly four-door traditional luxury car with a 23-gallon gas tank, the dealers said.

"It drives and handles beautifully for that size car," Smith said. "Frankly, I was amazed. It should compete nicely with the Seville in ride and handling."

Clements expects the car to be one of the hottest sellers at his Southern dealership and said it may "not replace the Lincolns but it will attract a lot of Cadillac owners."

Rule sees the Continental as a catalyst to stimulate the luxury market in California.

Lincoln-Mercury is taking special care of the components in the new Continental. After the zinc die-cast grille surround is cast and buffed, it is plated with copper semi-bright nickel and bright nickel and then hand-buffed before being returned to the plater for final chrome plating, a company spokesman said.

According to Gordon B. MacKenzie, L-M vice president and general manager, the Continental is a "magnificant car equal to the division's Town Car." He said it has a 108-inch wheelbase, compared with the 117-inch last year, and a 3.8 liter V-6 engine (a new powertrain) or a 5-liter V-8.

"Our engines are pretty straightforward," he said. "And we aren't concerned. We will have no problem with powertrains next year."

• Ford Motor Co. is testing the new V-6 engine in pre-production and, according to a company spokesman, the procedure is the most extensive of any new engine in Ford history.

He said the new engines are subjected to nearly 1,200,000 miles of on-the-road testing and were also hooked up to dynamometers for more than 51,000 hours of testing. Each engine was completely torn down after 50,000 miles and each component was checked for evidence of wear and then compared with the program's objectives. Improvements were made when needed.

Also, coming in the '82 model year will be the five-door Lynx,

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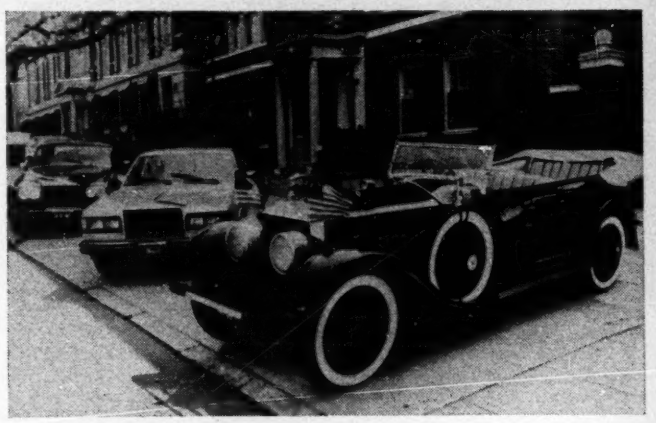
L-M dealers inspect five-door Lynx

Members of the marketing committee of Lincoln-Mercury Division's National Dealer Council met with divisions management in Detroit in June. They discussed marketing of the new 1982 cars, including this 5-door Lynx, and test drove them at the Dearborn Proving Ground.



Woodrow Wilson's Rolls

The Silver Ghost Rolls-Royce in the foreground was owned by President Woodrow Wilson. The car was built not in Great Britain but at the firm's plant in Springfield, Mass. It was displayed for the introduction of the new Rolls Silver Spur and Silver Spirit.

Mid-June sales tumble; total lowest since 1961

By Jenny L. King
Staff Writer

Mid-June domestic new-car sales were off from the low year-ago total as the market continued to resist a sales recovery.

June 11-20 sales numbered 172,170, down 8.12 percent from 187,379 a year ago. Low for the period was 131,848 back in 1958 while the boom year of 1973 saw mid-June sales soar to 311,044. This year's total was the lowest since 1961.

So far this year, sales have been down in 10 periods and up in seven periods. The mid-June daily selling rate averaged 19,130, down 8.12 percent from the year-earlier rate of 20,820. There were nine selling days this year and last.

Year-to-date sales totaled 3,138,259, down 2.43 percent from 3,216,499 through June 20, 1980. The daily selling rate for the year-to-date period was 21,643.

Only Chrysler Corp. reported a sales gain for mid-June. Chrysler sales climbed 16.50 percent, to 19,210 from 16,489 last year. AMC, which does not report period sales, was estimated to be up 2.33 percent, to 4,400 from 4,300.

General Motors sales dropped 11.69 percent, to 103,331 from 117,014 in 1980. Ford Motor Co. reported sales of 41,644, down 5.90 percent from 44,256. Volkswagen of America sales plunged 32.61 percent, to 3,585 from 5,320.

• GM's share of mid-June market remained large but it was down from the preceding year. GM earned 60.02 percent, off from 62.45 percent. Ford's share increased to 24.19 percent from 23.62 percnt. Chrysler climbed to 11.16 percent from 8.80 percent. AMC had an estimated 2.55 percent of the market, up from 2.29 percent, and VWoA slipped to 2.08 percent from 2.84 percent.

Six of the 13 U. S. makes reporting sales a year ago were up for mid-June this year, and seven were down. Imperial is a 1981 newcomer. Plymouth sales leaped 77.57 percent, Mercury was up 32.08 percent, Cadillac was up 8.47 percent, Dodge was up 7.18 percent, Oldsmobile was up 6.78 percent and AMC was up 2.33 percent.

Chrysler sales dropped 58.82 percent, Buick was down 36.79 percent, Volkswagen was down 32.61 percent, Lincoln was down 21.86 percent, Pontiac was down 20.62 percent, Ford was down 13.79 percent and Chevrolet was down 13.44 percent.

Emphasis shifts from van to car for Ford-Toyota

DEARBORN.—The drawn-out Ford-Toyota talks about a possible North American joint assembly venture are expected to now "center on a number of passenger vehicles" rather than a mini-van, a Ford official said last week.

Harold A. Poling, Ford North American Automotive Operations executive vice president, said the 12-month-old talks are complicated but that the two companies have "a good basic understanding" on the administrative and technical aspects but "have yet to agree on what product to produce."

He confirmed that in prior discussions the preferred vehicle was a mini-van, but that the emphasis had changed.

"I cannot predict the timing of an agreement," he said, "but it is becoming apparent that a decision will not be reached in the immediate future."

He said the two companies want to reach an agreement as quickly as possible and are working to that end but that they will take whatever time is needed to "assure the proper decision" about the right product for the venture.

DOMESTIC SALES

	June 11-20, 1981	June 11-20, 1980
AMERICAN MTRS.	4,400†	4,300†
Chrysler	1,623	3,848
Imperial	110	.....
Plymouth	9,910	5,581
Dodge	7,567	7,060
CHRYSLER CORP.	19,210	16,489
Ford	29,843	34,617
Mercury	10,453	7,914
Lincoln	1,348	1,725
FORD MOTOR	41,644	44,256
Buick	12,101	19,144
Cadillac	5,624	5,185
Chevrolet	36,479	42,145
Oldsmobile	35,112	32,884
Pontiac	14,015	17,656
GENERAL MTRS.	103,331	117,014
VOLKSWAGEN	3,585	5,320
INDUSTRY TOTAL	172,170	187,379

† estimate

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56th year — No. 4869

AUTOMOTIVE NEWS (ISSN 0005-1551) is published weekly except semiweekly the fourth week in April at 965 E. Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, MI 48207. Second-class postage is paid at Detroit, MI and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to AUTOMOTIVE NEWS, Circulation Department, 740 Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

To market Brazilian-made replicar of classic MG

Lafer building sales network in U. S.

NORTH HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — Word association time: Brazilian auto sold in the U. S .

Those who answered "Puma" are among the many who are unaware that a Brazilian furniture company has beaten Puma to the punch by selling an MG lookalike here called the Lafer MP.

It's a good-looking replica of the 1951 MGTD, built of hand-laid fiberglass mated to a Beetle chassis in the U. S. Unlike many, it is fully capable of freeway travel, with a top end put around 95 MPH.

And, unlike many specialty cars, the Lafer MP is being marketed through more than 25 auto dealers in the U. S. The U. S. is now getting 50 of the home firm's monthly production run of 110 autos.

But the most unusual feature of the Lafer MP is its heritage.

It was designed from original MGTDs by Percivale Lafer, one of three brothers who own Lafer S.A. Industria e Comercio, best known in the U. S. as the parent firm of Brazil Contempo, the upper-crust leather furniture chain.

The Lafers learned of fiberglass from building furniture frames and egg-shaped telephone booths supplied to the Brazilian government.

They easily perceived a demand for luxury autos in their home market. Brazil's strict home-content rule kept out all but high-volume makers.

So, in 1973, the first Lafer MP rolled off the San Paolo line, built on chassis supplied by the neighboring Volkswagen do Brazil. That was 4,500 cars ago.

The Lafers also build a fiberglass Mercedes SEL replica, based on a Brazilian Chevrolet chassis, for their home market, and a sportier version of the MP for the younger Brazilian market.

For the U. S. market, remanufactured Beetle chassis and engines are used because of EPA certification rules. But William Schumer, president of Lafer Auto Sales, the U. S. subsidiary based here, is hoping the VW do Brazil adaptation of the Rabbit engine to rear-engine configuration will become available for the U. S.

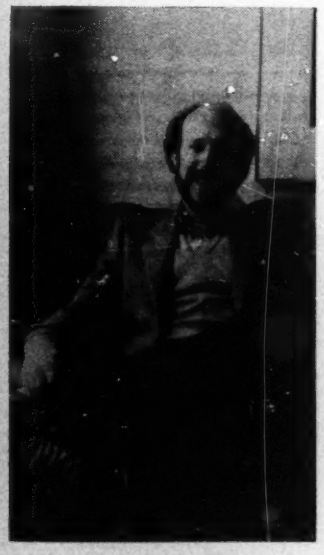
Meanwhile, Schumer is developing a network of specialty-car and traditional dealerships for the Lafer, which could be imported in volumes up to 100 a month, Schumer said.

About a third of the Lafer's U. S. dealers carry VW; others are required to service the autos themselves or to enter into cooperative agreements with nearby service points so the 12-month, 12,000-mile warranty can be honored.

The Lafer retails for around $14,000 on the West Coast, including leather interior—in the style of Brazil Contempo furniture — and wooden wheel and dash.

Glass power windows, hardtop, two-tone paint and stereo can be added.

Schumer, partner in four of the firm's California furniture outlets, said the Lafer is also experimenting with alcohol-powered engines for the U. S. market.



Lafer man in U. S.

William Schumer parleyed his furniture connection with the Lafer brothers into the presidency of Lafer Auto Sales, the U. S. arm of the Brazilian-made Lafer MP.

Model breakdown
Auction Averages

	JUNE	MAY	APRIL
1981	$7,126	$7,326	$8,014
1980	5,858	5,697	5,872
1979	4,857	4,843	4,807
1978	3,669	3,845	3,748
1977	2,972	3,086	2,886
1976	2,288	2,264	2,144
1975	1,699	1,708	1,605
1974	1,379	1,457	1,358
Overall AVERAGE	$4,286	$4,326	$4,116

Brazilian replicar

Body of this MGTD roadster replica, the Lafer MP, is built in Brazil of hand-laid fiberglass, mated to a Beetle engine and chassis at four U. S. points. Interior features the same plush leather and woodwork that is found in Brazil Contempo furniture stores supplied by the parent firm. Power windows and hardtop are among the options; base retail price through the 30-dealer network is $13,900. The U. S. is receiving about 50 MPs a month.

Used car sales
Auction Averages

June	$4,286
Month ago	$4,326
Year ago	$3,349

A-C Delco promotes three in sales and marketing

DETROIT. — AC-Delco Division of General Motors Corp., has announced three appointments in the sales and marketing activities at its headquarters here, effective immediately.

J. M. McKenzie, formerly sales manager, East, has been named sales manager, operations, and T. D. Lang, sales manager, marketing, succeeds McKenzie. C. S. Wagner, director of forward planning, assumes the position of director, marketing and forward planning with additional responsibilities for all marketing activities.

used-car auction directory

Display Rates: $83.00 per column inch (minimum space, 1 inch on 1 column). Listing Rates: (Maximum: Four lines of type - 1 time, $13.50; 13-times, $11.50; 26-times, $10.00; 52-times, $9.00. For Frequency Display Rates Contact Want Ad Dept., Automotive News, 965 E. Jefferson, Detroit 48207. Phone (313) 567-9520. Closing: 10 days in advance.

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AUCTION SCHOOL

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Oakland Auto Auction, 10121 E. 14 Oakland 3, NE 6-0621. Complete service out-of-state lease, fleet accounts. Fred Boardman.

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OHIO

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OHIO

Wednesday Auto Auction. Exit 49 on I-270, Columbus, Ohio. Every Wednesday. Call: Area 614-497-2000.

COLORADO

Denver Auto Auction, 4285 South Santa Fe, Englewood, Colorado 80110. Sale every Friday, 303-761-1410, 303-761-1459.

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Total tops previous week, swamps year-ago period

Auto output stays above 160,000

By Patricia Hoffman
Staff Writer

Domestic auto production last week showed a gain over the total for the previous week and was far above that of the comparable 1980 week.

The U. S. auto makers slated output at 163,147 units, up 1.90 percent from 160,103 completed in the previous week and up 31.04 percent from 124,498 built in the comparable 1980 week.

Auto production for year-to-date is 3,520,557, up 3.32 percent from 3,407,346 cars built in the comparable period last year.

Breakdown for last week by company is: General Motors, 63.91 percent; Ford Motor, 19.93 percent; Chrysler Corp., 12.01 percent; Volkswagen of America, 2.31 percent and American Motors, 1.84 percent.

Checker Motors' Kalamazoo assembly point was down last week. Downtime began June 19 and the plant is slated to resume operations July 13.

Saturday overtime was scheduled last week at five GM and three Chrysler facilities.

They were GM Tarrytown, Oklahoma City, Wilmington, Pontiac and Southgate and Chrysler Belvidere, Jefferson and Newark.

The Chrysler Belvidere and Jefferson points will continue on daily overtime this week working two nine-hour shifts.

GM's Doraville point (Malibu, Monte Carlo and Cutlass) closed last week (June 26) for model changeover to front-wheel-drive autos. The plant is scheduled to remain idle until September 28.

Saudi Arabia threatens Toyota with blacklist

Continued from Page 2

new effect," Jouppi said. "The possibility of an Arab reaction has been a factor in the talks since they began in March, 1980."

Harvey E. Hienbach, Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith Inc. vice president and auto analyst, said the Japanese have a history of being able to "bend" when business is at stake. He compared it to the willingness of the French to sell a nuclear reactor to Iraq in the name of commerce.

"The Middle East is an important market for Toyota, particularly with the pressure on in the U. S. and Europe," Heinbach said. "I think anything said to them by Saudi Arabia will cause them to sit up and take notice."

Ford last week said it had "no direct knowledge of the report" and therefore "it is difficult to respond." A Ford spokesman said the company had had no direct communication with Toyota about the matter but still hoped to reach an agreement.

Ford and Toyota began talks about a possible North American assembly joint venture early in 1980.

The talks were rumored but remained unconfirmed until later in the year. The Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry did leak some details prior to President Carter's July, 1980, visit to Japan.

Ford Chairman Philip Caldwell confirmed the talks in September. The two companies had planned to have reached a decision by the end of the current month, but earlier this year Caldwell said the talks would take a little longer than originally planned.

One of the points of contention apparently is exactly what type of vehicle might be best for a joint venture. Reportedly, the two sides cannot decide whether a car or truck project would be best, or even what type of truck might be best-suited.

• A Ford official said his company had not committed to either a car or mini-van project, although many observers have believed the talks were focusing on a truck project because Toyota had made known its mini-van preference.

The official did say that it now appears the mini-van project "has been back-burnered" in favor of talks about a small car "but not a mini-car."

Even if the mini-van project re-emerges, there is still a lack of agreement on type. Ford is said to favor its own front-drive mini-van, code-named Sierra, which is a scaled-down version of its existing conventional rear-drive van.

The Sierra has a stub nose with the driver position back from the front of the vehicle. It shares many components with the Ranger mini-pickup which will bow next year.

Toyota is said to favor a rear-drive successor to its Hi-Ace van model, with driver positioned up front, ahead of wheels and engine.

Sourcing also is a point of contention. Ford President Donald E. Petersen said in April this year that his company will insist on a high local content.

He also said the project would utilize one Ford plant with an annual capacity of about 300,000. The company's St. Louis, Lorain (O.) and St. Paul plants are said to be the leading contenders.

Truck production down for week; 39,398 assembled

U. S. truck production last week, although down from the previous week's output, continued to climb above the comparable year-ago totals.

The domestic truck makers scheduled 39,698 units last week, a 5.49 percent drop from the 42,006 trucks completed in the prior week, but up a substantial 52.68 percent from 26,001 units built the same week in 1980.

The truck manufacturers have also upped year-to-date output over the comparable 1980 period by 10.69 percent from 825,437 to 913,635 units.

Saturday overtime was scheduled last week at Chrysler's Warren truck and General Motors Detroit assembly points.

All U. S. truck facilities are slated to be idle for one day this week (July 3) in observance of the Independence Day holiday.

All of the International Harvester assembly points will remain idle through July 27 due to vacation shutdown. The other truck facilities are scheduled to resume normal operations next Monday (July 6).

Canadian output slips but exceeds year-ago week

Canadian auto and truck production last week dropped below the previous week's output, but the totals were above the comparable year-ago figures.

The auto manufacturers scheduled production last week at 23,061 units, down 1.86 percent from 23,499 completed in the previous week, but up 13.10 percent from 20,390 built in the comparable week last year.

Year-to-date, output for the auto makers was 455,796 units, up slightly from 455,400 assembled through June 28, 1980.

Truck production last week was targeted at 12,680 units, down 2.72 percent from 13,035 built in the previous week, but up 21.39 percent from 10,446 completed in the same week last year.

So far this year, the truck makers have built 290,101 trucks, up 2.51 percent from 283,006 completed in the comparable period last year.

Saturday overtime was scheduled last week at Chrysler's Pillette Road truck facility.

Volvo said that it's Halifax assembly point will be down Wednesday (July 1) in recognition of the Canada Day holiday.

All other Canadian assembly points have reported that operations will be idle on Friday, July 3, for the holiday.

U. S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended June 27, 1981	Week Ended June 28, 1980	Week Ended June 20, 1981	June to Date	Jan. 1 to June 28, 1980	Jan. 1 to June 27, 1981
AMERICAN MOTORS	3,000*	3,726*	2,400*	10,200*	87,883*	56,454*
AMX	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Spirit	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Concord	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Eagle	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pacer	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
CHRYSLER CORP.	19,600	7,760	17,641	75,540	325,580	426,167
Plymouth Total	10,600	4,020	9,378	40,450	149,174	220,275
Horizon	4,400	3,370	3,477	14,408	82,023	83,086
Reliant	6,200	.....	5,901	26,042	.....	127,602
Volare	.....	.....	.....	.....	50,706	.....
Caravelle	.....	.....	.....	.....	3,739	2,139
Gran Fury	.....	650	.....	.....	12,706	7,448
Chrysler Total	.....	480	.....	.....	42,983	22,098
LeBaron	.....	.....	.....	.....	32,543	17,236
Chrysler	.....	480	.....	.....	10,440	4,862
Dodge Total	9,000	3,260	8,263	35,090	133,423	183,794
Omni	3,300	2,750	3,615	13,966	71,642	65,783
Aspen	.....	.....	.....	.....	36,328	.....
Aries	5,700	.....	4,648	21,124	.....	101,685
Diplomat	.....	.....	.....	.....	15,566	12,644
St. Regis	.....	510	.....	.....	9,887	3,682
FORD MOTOR	32,517	25,351	33,017	136,587	684,252	748,927
Ford Division	21,142	18,554	21,390	88,924	506,197	510,064
Escort	8,314	.....	8,333	32,276	.....	191,947
Pinto	.....	3,514	.....	.....	59,343	.....
Fairmont	5,260	2,750	5,293	20,337	141,111	109,782
Must./Must. II	5,258	4,211	4,830	19,803	135,059	87,548
Granada	153	4,063	2,934	8,637	46,871	43,496
Thunderbird	2,157	2,000	.....	4,388	74,843	36,405
Ford	.....	2,016	.....	3,483	48,970	40,886
L-M Division	11,375	6,797	11,627	47,663	178,055	238,863
Mercury Total	9,735	5,476	9,942	40,238	160,843	202,560
Bobcat	.....	486	.....	.....	10,747	.....
Lynx	3,017	.....	3,067	11,988	.....	66,697
Capri	2,096	1,297	2,080	8,186	39,189	31,019
Zephyr	2,057	1,090	2,007	8,054	45,203	33,913
Cougar/Monarch	206	1,323	1,474	4,670	15,454	22,459
XR-7	1,069	.....	.....	2,103	23,752	15,880
Mercury	1,290	1,280	1,314	5,237	26,498	32,592
Lincoln Total	1,640	1,321	1,685	7,425	17,212	36,303
Lincoln	820	650	842	3,722	6,530	17,710
Mark VI	820	671	843	3,703	8,821	18,593
Versailles	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,861	.....
GENERAL MOTORS	104,270	83,205	103,286	415,212	2,204,015	2,195,147
Buick Division	17,890	17,464	18,079	75,970	435,727	481,944
Skylark	5,397	5,124	5,140	21,418	118,861	132,248
Century	1,796	3,685	1,828	8,202	96,076	84,697
Regal	5,880	4,475	5,755	26,616	115,193	147,273
Buick	3,487	3,435	4,069	14,668	80,536	86,787
Riviera	1,330	745	1,287	5,066	25,061	30,939
Cadillac Division	7,335	4,076	7,067	27,853	109,535	145,081
Cimarron	1,000	.....	819	3,300	.....	4,256
Seville	490	725	477	1,868	18,631	14,296
Eldorado	1,605	1,210	1,558	6,116	28,307	34,755
Cadillac	4,240	2,141	4,213	16,569	62,597	91,774
Chevrolet Division	42,317	37,202	41,828	163,710	926,956	798,553
Chevette	8,414	9,815	8,472	32,509	234,533	171,424
Cavalier	4,001	.....	3,229	12,785	.....	24,853
Monza ('80)	.....	3,625	.....	.....	88,220	.....
Camaro	4,428	2,556	4,758	17,996	68,504	76,789
Citation	9,299	10,041	8,935	34,892	245,064	193,012
Malibu	6,594	6,778	7,055	27,639	143,395	146,319
Monte Carlo	3,951	1,187	4,071	16,457	56,376	78,439
Chevrolet	4,800	2,400	4,807	19,193	68,136	92,789
Corvette	830	800	501	2,239	22,728	14,928
Oldsmobile Division	19,955	11,677	20,146	84,093	424,077	500,117
Omega	3,300	2,672	3,314	13,049	62,726	79,158
Cutlass	9,698	6,430	9,931	43,407	211,681	250,680
Oldsmobile	5,902	1,575	5,880	23,617	128,196	144,380
Toronado	1,055	1,000	1,021	4,020	21,474	25,899
Pontiac Division	16,773	12,786	16,166	63,586	307,720	269,452
Acadian†	450	200	450	1,932	12,824	12,172
J2000	3,143	.....	3,115	11,072	.....	22,088
Sunbird ('80)	.....	2,775	.....	.....	77,246	.....
T1000	2,666	.....	2,606	10,070	.....	37,377
Firebird	2,532	1,545	2,777	10,457	45,063	37,329
Phoenix	2,804	3,116	2,603	10,408	71,580	62,073
Grand Prix	3,019	2,240	2,631	11,233	32,847	56,138
LeMans	1,797	1,720	1,628	6,982	33,342	34,354
Pontiac	362	1,190	356	1,432	34,818	7,921
VOLKSWAGEN	3,760	4,375	3,689	10,832	103,965	92,644
CHECKER	.....	81*	70*	215*	1,651	1,218*
Total Cars, U. S.	163,147	124,498	160,103	648,586	3,407,346	3,520,557

TRUCK PRODUCTION IN U. S.†

	Week Ended June 27, 1981	Week Ended June 28, 1980	Week Ended June 20, 1981	June to Date	Jan. 1 to June 28, 1980	Jan. 1 to June 27, 1981
CHEVROLET	12,337	8,087	14,034	52,319	255,131	294,732
DODGE/PLYMOUTH	2,800	3,040	2,515	10,754	80,529	49,759
FORD	14,346	6,063	15,477	61,561	287,444	333,570
GMC	3,974	4,227	4,216	16,268	84,643	96,429
INTERNATIONAL	1,690	2,485	1,673	6,679	23,816	37,206
MACK	.....	450	.....	.....	13,335	.....
JEEP	2,121*	.....	1,697	7,212*	39,991*	43,895*
AMC CORP.	90*	143*	90*	360*	4,567*	2,165*
VOLKSWAGEN	1,400*	881*	1,400*	5,600*	21,311*	31,200*
MISCELLANEOUS	940	625	904	2,678	14,670	22,679
Total Trucks, U. S.	39,698	26,001	42,006	163,431	825,437	913,635

CANADIAN CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended June 27, 1981	Week Ended June 28, 1980	Week Ended June 20, 1981	June to Date	Jan. 1 to June 28, 1980	Jan. 1 to June 27, 1981
AMERICAN MOTORS	840	.....	711	3,003	.....	16,546
CHRYSLER CORP.	2,480	2,400	2,233	7,779	36,973	20,189
FORD MOTOR	7,352	6,517	7,500	29,909	138,500	121,735
GENERAL MOTORS	12,164	11,248	12,830	50,640	274,472	291,924
VOLVO	225	225	225	869	5,455	5,402
Total Cars, Canada	23,061	20,390	23,499	92,200	455,400	455,796
N. American Cars	186,208	144,888	183,602	740,786	3,862,746	3,976,353
N. American Trucks	52,378	36,447	55,041	213,791	1,108,443	1,203,736
North American Cars and Trucks	238,586	181,335	238,643	954,577	4,971,189	5,180,089

CANADIAN TRUCK PRODUCTION

	Week Ended June 27, 1981	Week Ended June 28, 1980	Week Ended June 20, 1981	June to Date	Jan. 1 to June 28, 1980	Jan. 1 to June 27, 1981
CHRYSLER CORP.	2,400	.....	2,468	8,907	22,198	41,214
FORD MOTOR	3,484	4,292	3,417	13,742	100,337	86,737
GENERAL MOTORS	6,551	5,639	6,900	26,720	139,434	155,933
AMERICAN MOTORS	.....	.....	.....	.....	11,644	.....
INTERNATIONAL	245	475	250	991	8,131	6,217
MACK	.....	40	.....	.....	1,262	.....
Total Trucks, Canada	12,680	10,446	13,035	50,360	283,006	290,101
N. American Trucks	52,378	36,447	55,041	213,791	1,106,443	1,203,736

†—Now includes window van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial vehicles only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.
AM General will no longer be figured in with North American trucks.

†—All Acadians and Caravelles are built for sale in Canada. *—Estimated.